Social Life

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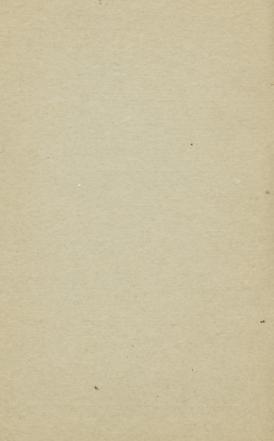
Vegetarianism.

BY

MARTHA J. ANDERSON,

MOUNT LEBANON, N. Y.

1893.



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Guiding Star Printing House,
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CHICAGO, ILL.



INTRODUCTION.

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As there are many inquiries concerning the domestic arrangements of our Communistic Home, the following,—which was written for the "Herald of Health," a few months since—may give some idea of the daily routine of life in the North Family of the Mt. Lebanon "United Society of Believers," commonly called "Shakers."

There are fifteen societies in the United States, extending from Maine to Kentucky. These are formed of families of from two to six in a community, each of which, under the counsel and direction of a central

Ministry or Bishopric, has charge of its own affairs. In each family there are two Elders and Eldresses, who hold parental government, and spiritual ministration, and also have general oversight of business, counselling with the Deacons and Deaconesses who have charge of, and provide for, temporal needs. As there is perfect equality of the sexes in our home, guaranteed by the law of absolute purity, which frees woman from masculine dominance, the sisterhood are insured the right to manage their own affairs, to carry on such work as they deem proper and profitable in earning an honest livelihood. All labor, from the least to the greatest, according to strength and ability, and individual faculties find scope and expanse in the varied industries that sustain the "United Inheritance."

Health Notes From Mount Lebanon.

THE CHLINARY DEPARTMENT .- It is essential to good health that meals should be eaten at regular intervals. In the orderly round of our Shaker life, we never vary from stated hours; breakfast is at six in the summer. (half an hour later in winter,) dinner at twelve, and supper at six. We have a light and airy kitchen, divided into cooking, baking and dining rooms; good soapstone ovens, heated with coal from beneath; a first-class range, with large copper boiler; suitable cooking utensils, mostly agate ware; these, with plenty of hot and cold water in the various departments, make our work comparatively easy. We have also another model arrangement-a cooling room on a level with the kitchen-which saves much backache and weariness, and answers the place of a refrigerator, or down-stairs cellar. It is built of stone, by the side of the coal receiver; around the sides are coils of iron pipe through which the cold mountain water circulates, and then passes into two Portland cement sinks, where we set away the food in earthen crocks. We find it keeps much better than when put on ice. There are some board shelves at the side, which we find very convenient.

For a family of between fifty and sixty members, we have six sisters and a little girl to perform kitchen duties, and one to attend to company; no other work is required of them outside of the culinary department. These change with others every second or third month—from four to six weeks is a term.

It lessens the labor considerably not to cook meat, and after some twenty years' experience, we find we can do as well without it. There are veteran vegetarians among us who have worked many years in the field of reform, but with most of us it has been a gradual growth.

Our breakfast usually consists of oatmeal or wheat mush, baked or boiled potatoes, tomatoes cooked with milk and bread crumbs, warm apple sauce and Graham pie.

Dinner is more varied. There are three kinds of vegetables, sometimes the addition of soup, plain fruit sauce, either pie, pudding or other dessert.

For supper we have boiled rice with sugar and cream, or mashed potato, tomato stew, apples baked, or in sauce, and preserves. We frequently have the addition of fresh creamed cottage cheese or crisp celery; the latter we think good for the nerves. The green stalks of celery are cut up in small pieces and cooked until tender, which

takes several hours. Season when half done; when ready to take up, add a little thickened milk or cream, and put on nice fresh slices of toasted bread.

The water in which potatoes are boiled makes a delicious soup, by adding a little egg batter, a pinch of parsley, seasoning, and a cup of milk, cream, or a bit of butter. The best part of the potatoes is usually thrown away.

We put up three or four hundred gallons of tomatoes every season. Cooked in various ways, and eaten in moderate quantities, we consider them a healthful article of food. Our chief method is this: To one quart of boiling tomatoes add one quart of cold milk; (if it all strings together do not be alarmed, it will boil out,) when it foams up well, add some rolled cracker or bread crumbs, let it boil the third time, season to

the taste with salt and pepper, add a little cream or butter, and serve boiling hot from a covered dish.

Tea and coffee are used on our table in moderate quantities, no one taking more than one cupful at a meal; some prefer hot water. Hot beverages should be made of freshly boiled water; if it has stood in the tea-kettle over night it is not fit for use.

No one can well abstain from a meat diet unless he has good bread. We have three kinds on the table at each meal; white bread, also unleavened and leavened, made of unbolted wheat, which is washed and ground fresh at home every week. Warm rye and Indian bread, baked six hours in a covered iron dish, is nice for breakfast; so is oatmeal made into bread.

With a moderate amount of skill, and an interest in hygienic methods of preparing food, a good housekeeper can place on the table many appetizing dishes cooked without fat or soda. The more one becomes accustomed to plain food, the finer grows the sense of taste; rich, greasy viands become alike obnoxious to sight, palate and stomach.

Would it not be better for the poor to save their hard earned dollar and buy fruit for their families, thus preventing a feverish condition of the blood, engendered by too much heavy food? We are increasing our fruit crop every year. Grapes are especially wholesome and are much cheaper and more palatable than drugs.

Sickness.—We have but little serious sickness in our family, and seldom call on the doctor. People are not as strong physically as were their ancestors, but those who come among us in ill health usually improve in a short time; especially is it so with children. We have taken some very

frail ones who have grown stronger. Some must always battle with inherited tendencies to disease, but if they live strictly moral lives, and adhere to hygienic laws they will live more comfortably. Great good is attained in this direction by fortifying the mind against the ills of the body, and rising superior to them.

We have not had a fever in the family for thirty years. Judicious water treatment, simple massage, and the use of hot herb drinks, are our methods of cure in cases of sickness.

HEAT AND VENTILATION.—Three of our large houses are heated by steam. The dwelling containing the sleeping apartments breathes. In the roof, directly over the stairways at each end, there are large Archimedian ventilators; they are kept open in warm weather, but are closed in winter because cold air comes down in large quantities. In the base-

boards of the rooms are ventilators; also over the doors, and in the chimneys. On the outside of the house, directly back of the heater, there is an aperture which conveys air up through the tubes of the radiators, so there is a warm as well as a fresh atmosphere to breathe; it is a circulating current all through the room. The cold air is drawn from the floor and heated, so we have no cold feet nor overheated heads. Two inch width boards are used under the lower part of the windows; this gives a current of air between the sashes, and there is no draught.

SLEEP.—When people turn night into day, and keep in a state of unnatural excitement, there is no normal sleep; hence the increasing use of narcotics. The old adage, "Early to bed," etc., contains a goodly amount of wisdom. The members of our household usually retire by nine

o'clock, or earlier if they choose. The quietness and harmony of our surroundings enable most persons to sleep well. We rise at five or halfpast five A. M.; the early chores are done, such as milking, taking care of teams and furnaces by the brethren, kitchen and dairy work by the sisters. Some of us make it a rule to go out in the fresh'air, breathe deeply and take a little exercise before breakfast. As soon as we are up, all the bedclothes are taken off and laid across chairs and nicely aired. The windows are thrown wide open during the breakfast hour, and, if the weather is mild, all the forenoon until halfpast eleven, when the rooms are put in order. No one sleeps on a feather bed; we have bedsteads on rollers so they can be easily moved about; the footboard is low, and the bedclothes hang loosely around the sides, so the air can have free circulation. We use wire spring beds and have mattresses. Great attention is given to drainage, so we do not have sewer gas to breathe. Our bathrooms and water-closets are all well ventilated.

TABOR.—We have no alloted hours of labor, as we are not the wageslaves of a soulless corporation; we all have a united interest to build up our communistic home, where all share equally the blessings of existence. Formerly, brethren had occupations that kept some indoors most of the time, such as putting up seeds and broom making; competition has ruined their business, and they are obliged to do what little they can in the line of farming, gardening and orcharding to get a living. We have some carpentering and mechanical work that occupies the time of a few.

The sisters make white shirts, by

water power. The younger sisters are the operators; they run the machines eight hours a day and frequently change employment. Those who are in places of care and trust usually work the hardest, and their hours of toil are the longest, because there are many duties devolving on them. In a communistic home the Scripture is fulfilled: "He that would be greatest among you, let him be the servant of all."

CLOTHING.—The day of cloth weaving is past—an industry that was carried on for many years in our societies. Fabrics are procured more cheaply than we can make them by hand, but none are so durable. We do our own tailoring and dressmaking, and knit our own hose, especially for winter wear, from home-made woolen yarn. The clothing of the sisters is more uniform in style than that of the brethren, and we change

our fashions only when we can make a garment more comfortable and comely. The sisters wear knit or flannel underwear in winter, and our skirts are attached to waists. We do not encase ourselves in corsets, believing that nature constructed the intercostal muscles and ribs to be selfsupporting, and that any artificial aid weakens the thorax and compresses the vitals to the detriment of the health, besides destroying freedom of motion. We have good, warm, homemade shoes, common sense and comfortable in every respect, so we can take a firm, elastic step, and are not tortured with corns, bunions, and chilblains, which come from wearing tight shoes and thin stockings. Our light lace caps save us from wearing wads of false hair, and from hours of hair dressing.

IMPROVEMENTS. — Great improvements have been made in the past few

years in labor-saving machinery. Our washing is done with much less drudgery. A good mill for cleansing the clothes, and a wringer, both run by water power, save muscular strength. In summer our clothes are dried out of doors on stationary galvanized wires on a well kept lawn; in winter, by hot air in a small room. We have a brother who is an excellent machinist, to whom we are indebted for many conveniences.

RECREATION. — We seldom leave home except on duty. In summer and winter the family have a day's outing, and sometimes a company of brethren and sisters visit other societies, or spend a few days from home for a change and recreation. The boys attend school in winter, the girls in summer, and when they are not in school they are receiving an industrial education, mingled with innocent amusements. The younger sisters

have an hour for music each day, and in the summer evenings take great pleasure in playing croquet on the lawn, or taking a pleasant walk through the orchards and gardens; they also have flower beds requiring their care and attention. Our evenings are spent in reading, writing and knitting; we have some kind of meeting nearly every night, either for worship, general reading, singing or mutual improvement.

We endeavor to keep well informed on general topics of interest and reform; many papers are taken in the family, both secular and spiritual, and as we do not believe in light reading or frivolous amusements, we strive for ethical and æsthetical culture on the higher planes of thought and life.

COMMON SENSE RECIPES.

Raised Graham Bread.

Procure good flour, made of the whole wheat, and not that which is mostly bran.

For sponge, pour a little boiling milk on one pint of superfine flour, beat well to make smooth, then add more of the scalded milk to make it the consistency of thin batter. When cool, put in one table-spoonful of good yeast, cover, and keep moderately warm over night. In the morning, add half a pint of warm milk, and mix in enough Graham flour to make a soft dough, just stiff enough to mould lightly; put in tins, as soon as it begins to appear honey-combed, and place immediately in the oven. It does not take as long to rise as white dough.

Unleavened Graham Bread.

Upon three points of very coarse meal, pour boiling milk, stirring briskly; make the consistency of porridge. When it cools a little, stir in one pint of dry meal, let stand until cool enough to handle, mould into small loaves, and bake on the oven bottom, or in tins. Strong heat is required to make it light; a cool oven makes it heavy.

Graham Gems.

Into a quart of milk stir a pint and a half of fine Graham flour; add a pinch of salt, and stir briskly. This quantity will make twenty-four gems. To have them nice and light, the gem pans must be very hot; grease them well, pour in the batter, and bake in a well heated oven.

Graham Pie Crust.

Mix one quart of fine Graham meal with two thirds milk and lone third

cream; if cream cannot be obtained, take a table-spoonful of good butter instead. Let it stand half or three quarters of an hour to swell, then take it out on the rolling board (which should be well dusted with white flour,) and mould it thoroughly until it is free from a sticky teeling; roll quite thin. This makes a wholesome and digestable crust for any kind of pie. When rolled very thin, placed in tins and cut in squares, it makes delicious crackers, if nicely baked, without burning.

Graham Gruel.

To one pint of boiling water, add a pinch of salt, and one table-spoonful of Graham flour, previously wet with a little cold water; let it boil fifteen minutes. A table-spoonful of cream and a little sugar, if preferred, make it very palatable.

Oatmeal Mush.
Into one quart of boiling water

stir one pint of oat flakes. Cook thoroughly, but do not stir after it is made, as it makes it slippery. All cereals should be cooked in an inside vessel, either by steam or in hot water.

Vegetable Soup.

Chop fine two potatoes, medium size, one small turnip, a stalk of celery, and a small piece of carrot. Into two quarts of boiling water put two table-spoonfuls of pearled barley, and the vegetables; boil one hour, season to taste, then add a small lump of good butter or a teacup of sweet cream. Make a batter of one egg, a cupful of milk, and flour enough to make it so it will drop off the spoon easily. Ten minutes before taking up the soup, while it is boiling briskly, pour in the batter slowly; it will float around on the top, and will have the taste of vermicelli.

Potato Soup.

Peel, boil, mash and strain, six middle sized potatoes; in two quarts of cold water put one table-spoonful of rice; when it has boiled half an hour, put in the potato, and some finely cut parsley. Boil twenty minutes longer, then drop in some batter made of one egg, half a teacup of milk, stiffened with wheat flour. Season to the taste, and add half a teacup of cream, or a small piece of butter.

Onion Soup.

Into two quarts of cold water put two table-spoonfuls either of barley or rice. Chop two small onions fine; when the water has boiled add the onions, cook one hour, season to the taste, and add a little butter or cream.

Bean Soup.

Wash and soak one pint of nice white beans over night; parboil half an hour, turn off the water, put in more boiling water, and cook three hours, or until done. Cool, strain through a collander, then bring to a boil; put in a teacupful of milk or cream, in which has been mixed a table-spoonful of flour. Season to the tiste. Toast two slices of bread a light brown, butter and break in pieces in a deep dish, pour the soup over at the last moment, so that the bread will not be soaked too much.

Sliced Beets.

Wash and boil until nice and tender, being careful not to cut the skin; when done, pour cold water over them, rub off the skins, sliver up in very small pieces, put on pepper and salt, a little piece of butter, add half a teacup of vinegar, stir all together, and set on the back of the range in a covered earthen dish, until wanted for dinner.

Cut Cabbage.

One medium sized head of cabbage, sliced fine; put in a close covered porcelain dish, cook half an hour, pour off the water, add a little thickened milk or cream, season to the taste, cook fifteen minutes more over a moderate heat, and it is ready for the table.

Potatoes.

The more simply potatoes are cooked the easier they are digested. A steaming dishful of white, mealy potatoes is appetizing, but when they are soggy or half done, it is usually from improper cooking. They should be done, and have the water turned off ten minutes before they are taken up. Slide the cover off a little way so that the steam may pass off.

Potatoes should never be fried in fat of any kind. Sliced fine, when cold, and heated in a little milk or cream with seasoning, they are much better than when saturated with grease.

There are many ways in which vegetables may be served to make them attractive, palatable and wholesome. Those who do not use tobacco and strong drink, relish the plainest food, detecting and enjoying the fine flavors of the fruits of mother Earth. To live simply is to live to nature, and enjoy her common blessings.

But fools create themselves new appetites."

[&]quot;Man needs but little, were his judgment true, Nature is frugal and her wants are few. Those few wants answered bring sincere delights,

TABLE MONITOR.

('omposed and published many years ago, but none the less true.

Gather up the fregments that remain, that nothing be lost.—Christ.

Which Jesus has set;
And his good example
We cannot forget:
With thanks for his blessings
His word we'll obey;
But on this occasion
We've somewhat to say.

We wish to speak plainly
And use no deceit;
We like to see fragments
Left wholesome and neat:
To customs and fashions
We make no pretense.
Yet think we can tell
What belongs to good sense.

What we deem good order,
We're willing to state—
Eat hearty and decent,
And clear out our plate—
Be thankful to heaven
For what we receive,
And not make a mixture
Or compound to leave.

We find of those bounties
Which heaven does give,
That some live to eat,
And that some eat to live;
That some think of nothing
But pleasing the taste,
And care very little
How much they do waste.

Tho' Heaven has bless'd us
With plenty of food:
Bread, butter and honey
And all that is good,
We loathe to see mixtures
Where gentle folks dine,
Which scarcely look fit
For the poultry or swine.

We often find left,
On the same china dish,
Meat, apple sauce, pickle,
Brown bread and minc'd fish;
Another's replenish'd
With butter and cheese;
With pie, cake and toast,
Perhaps, added to these.

Now if any virtue
In this can be shown,
By peasant, by lawyer,
Or king on the throne,
We freely will forfeit
Whatever we've said,
And call it a virtue
To waste meat and bread.

Let none be offended
At what we here say;
We candidly ask you,
Is that the best way?
If not—lay such customs
And fashions aside,
And take this monitor
Henceforth for your guide.





